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ABSTRACT

The curriculum, administration, staffing, facilities, and funding of a college English-as-a-Second-Language program for the wives of foreign students are described. The program is intended to reduce feelings of isolation and facilitate the adjustment of women whose student husbands are busy with the academic and social routines of the university. The program serves the university as well as the participants by offering opportunities for cultural exchange for the institution and the community as a whole. All women dependents of international students are welcomed at any time, whether attendance is sporadic or regular. Children may be brought to classes. Placement is flexible, with emphasis placed on student determination, pride in accomplishment, and acceptance of student needs. While the language used in the classroom is English, many activities are designed to let students and teachers learn about the cultures of all of the students through the discussion of cultural mores and sharing of national dishes and their preparation, favorite songs, and special holidays and traditions. (MSE)

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AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAM

FOR WIVES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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INTRODUCTION

As universities have continued to enroll increasing numbers of international students an unexpected problem has arisen. In the period after World War II when significant numbers of international students began to attend American universities they tended to be European and either single or lacked the funds to support dependents. More recently, however, increasing numbers of these students are from Third World countries (eighty percent of the foreign student enrollment in 1982). Much of this new population is being supported by "petro-dollars" (TESOL Newsletter 1983) and for the first time there are the funds to support the families of the students. Thus members of this new student population frequently come to the United States with a wife, and often they either have one or more children, or at least one child is born while they are in the United States.

The students themselves are soon immersed in the busy academic and social routines of the university. In contrast, their wives are often isolated. Language, cultural, and social barriers interfere with these women's usual routines. The supermarkets bewilder them, the necessity of making a doctor's appointment over a telephone in an unfamiliar language intimidates them, and the concern over having a baby in a hospital where "no one knows my language" is frightening beyond belief. Furthermore, many of them are accustomed to the social warmth of a supportive extended family unit. While their husbands are in school, they are cooped up in a small apartment, perhaps only a solitary room, without even a single friend with whom they can visit. Many of these wives get depressed by this isolation and either demand

to go home, or prevail upon their husbands to take precious study time to fill the social gap usually filled by the extended family structure.

Rather than have promising international students withdraw from their degree programs or become incapable of concentrating on their studies, several universities have initiated special (and often free) English language programs for the wives of their students. Although these are functioning language instruction programs, the classes also serve as a framework for reducing the isolation and culture shock experienced by these women.

The English language program provides a place for these women to go, a purpose for their going there, and an opportunity to meet not only many other wives of students, who are experiencing similar difficulties, but perhaps even other women in the program who share the same or a similar language, culture, and traditions. Further, because the program's volunteer staff is usually comprised of mature women from the local community, the wives also find the staff a treasure-trove of information on topics of immediate concern to themselves and their families. The network of friends, both the other wives and volunteers, creates a pseudo-extended-family support system, reducing the feelings of isolation and providing the assistance these wives (and their husbands) need until the necessary adjustments have been made.

This paper describes the curriculum, administration, and staffing, as well as physical facilities and financial support, required to operate an English language program for the wives of international students.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The English language program for the wives of international students functions as a service to the university. It justifies its existence by providing social as well as English-language training opportunities for the wives of university students. However, this service not only provides one of the important support systems needed to assist international students, but it also offers valuable opportunities for the university as well as the community at large to participate in an enriching cultural exchange.

All women who are the dependents of international students enrolled in the university are welcomed. 1 Attendance is on a "come when you can" basis. The wives may register at any time during the term. They may arrive late or leave classes early; they may only attend sporadically. No matter: they still are warmly welcomed. Often a woman who has missed a lot of classes is too embarrassed to attend any more; the staff makes an effort to invite her back.

Although some programs are able to make arrangements for child care, there will usually be a few children in the classes. They are always welcome--as long as they are quiet enough not to disturb the classes. This means that there will be babies in arms or strollers, as well as toddlers playing quietly. If a child becomes noisy, the mother is expected to take him out until he can be quieted. The description sounds more chaotic than the actual situation is. The majority of students come and leave on time. The children are usually quiet. But the classroom environment is considerably different from that in the typical academic ESL program.

Other differences are found in the placement and evaluation procedures. Placement is necessary, but not rigid; the emphasis in this program is based on student determination. One woman will go to the more advanced class because the friend who brought her is at that level; later, when she is better acquainted she moves to her own level. Occasionally there are women who are in some way inhibited about learning languages. They feel uncomfortable staying in a low level class for several terms so they move themselves to a higher level. And there is the student who stops and listens in to what is going on in each class and selects the level that sounds most interesting at the time.

Evaluation of increasing language fluency is important to both students and teachers. However, since the language learning program is also the vehicle by which other purposes of the program are implemented, it is essential that no one be intimidated by the demands of a rigid academic atmosphere. Final exams and grades on tests or compositions have no place in this program. Teaching is accomplished through assessment and evaluation, not through criticism and competition. Every student is made welcome and encouraged to take pride in her own accomplishments. Sometimes these are in language skills; just as often they are in social or psychological adjustments she is required to make in order to accept the cultural differences she finds living in an alien culture.

In sum, the attitude towards the women is one of patience and warm acceptance. The key word is "flexible." But if the entire program were too flexible there would be no program. Stability is achieved through consistency in the staff, in the physical facilities and in an assigned text series. Every decision made regarding the

program has as its goal helping these visitors to the campus and to a new country make the adjustments that are necessary so that the memories of their stay will be as happy as possible.

It must be noted that the students in the program are not the only ones who develop a sense of achievement. Nor is the program designed just for Americans to teach their language and culture to international women. Although the language medium is English, many of the activities are designed to let the students as well as their teachers learn about the cultures of all the students in the classes. This is accomplished through the discussion of cultural mores, the sharing of national dishes and their preparation, favorite songs, and special holidays and traditions. As the teachers take these ideas into their neighborhoods the entire community becomes a beneficiary of a most rewarding cultural interchange.

Thus, the English program for international wives not only provides the university with an extremely valuable support system for their international students and scholars, but creates a richer and deeper cultural environment for the community at large as well as for the families of the students and scholars.

THE PROGRAM DESIGN AND ITS RATIONALE

An effective language program demands that a sound theoretical base underlie its design. Several criteria must be considered. Among these are the types of students being served and their purposes for learning English, affective considerations, both the psychological attitude of the student entering the program and the sociological climate of the classroom, and the practical availability of resources to fill those needs. Then, with this information, decisions can be

made concerning texts, methods of teaching, and other classroom management matters (McKay 1981).

The typical wives' program is offered free or at minimal cost to the students. Therefore the resources are limited to those available through the generosity of the sponsoring agency, in the case of the program being described here, the university, and of the local community. These parameters influence all other decisions. Included in them is the fact that most of the teachers will be nonprofessionals. Such a condition is enough to give professional ESL teachers and administrators nightmares.

Another criteria of an effective language program is a well-trained professional staff working in optimal language learning conditions. In this program the professional staff is not economically feasible. However, the affective conditions requisite for effective language learning, so difficult to establish in the academic setting, may be easier to achieve where rigid time limits, formal course objectives, and grades are not part of the program. In this sense it may be that classes such as the wives' program offer language training superior to that in the typical academic classroom.

Being sensitive to the affective needs of the students is a crucial factor in the program design. The first consideration is the psychological status of the entering students. Typically the new registrant comes to class within two or three weeks of her arrival in the United States. She is usually very young, often a new bride, and it is not uncommon for her to have been married to a virtual stranger. Thus, she finds herself in a new country, needing to speak an unfamiliar language in order to satisfy the most basic survival needs,

while simultaneously learning to adjust to being married to a man with whom she may be barely acquainted.

F. Schuman (1980) addresses this transition difficulty. Stress caused by transition anxiety from foreign travel and the disrupted "nesting patterns" must be ameliorated before teaching can be effective. Kleinmann (1982), Rivers (1981), and others point out that external factors which impinge upon the learners' day to day survival crucially affect her ability to concentrate on the task of language learning. Maslow (1970) posits a hierarchy of basic needs: security, belonging, self esteem, esteem for others, and self realization. When the students arrive at the university often even the most basic need, that for security, a place to live and a sense of familiarity with the home environment, has not been filled. Until this primary need is satisfied, the other needs of the hierarchy cannot be.

Related to the pattern of stress described by Maslow and Schuman is that of culture shock, a widely discussed topic in ESL literature. Brown (1980) summarizes the research regarding acculturation problems. There are four stages, euphoric, when all the newness and excitement of a different culture come to the fore and the individual embraces wholeheartedly these differences. The second stage, culture shock, is a polemical reaction to those differences. The person, feeling estranged from her native culture, rejects all that is new, as well as the language and people associated with the target culture. The third stage, culture stress, represents a slow adjustment to the differences between the two cultures, and gradually the individual begins to accept and even to become empathetic with the target culture. The fourth stage represents near or full recovery, acceptance of the target culture and a new self-confidence as an individual.

Trifonovitch (1980) explicates one of the causes of transition stress. Because culture is affecively learned, an individual is not normally aware of her own cultural patterns, or rather that her culture does things differently from other cultures until she comes into contact with people from different backgrounds. Then, as accustomed behavior patterns are mirrored in another's behavior the individual realizes that her "system of reference to the world of reality is not the same and does not hold true for all people and all cultures" (p. 551). It is this lack of awareness which creates the initial enchantment, then the disillusionment of culture shock.

These studies all indicate that, as is the case with all international students, when the women enter the wives' class they are most likely to be under tremendous psychological stress and can be expected to need a particularily warm, supportive social climate. Larsen and Smalley (1972) believe that:

> What the learner needs is a small community of sympathetic people who will help him in the difficult period when he is a linguistic and cultural child-adult. He needs a new family to help him grow up (p. 46).

Unfortunately, in the standard language training program, the requirement to meet academic demands for academic rewards within rigid time constraints, and frequently attempting to satisfy the multifaceted demands of highly motivated but instrumentally oriented students with a dozen or more degree objectives, the focus on language teaching all too often becomes a matter of assessing performance of skills taught within a given time slot. As Kleinmann (1982) points out, ESL teachers are generally aware of the external factors which they intuitively recognize must affect their students' ability to absorb, retain, and implement the use of new information, but neither

the conditions under which they work nor their training permits them to offer much more than sympathy.

In contrast, the conditions which obtain in the wives' class are, in and of themselves, similar to the small community larsen and Smalley envision. Although there are many differences in terms of cultural and linguistic heritage, sophistication, and English fluency, the students still share several commonalities. Far away from familiar places and loving families, they find themselves in an alien culture where they are separated from familiar housing accommodations and fods, and comparatively predictable rules governing personal relationships. In learning to cope with these shocks to their own ethnocentricism, they need friends.

Although students in regular academic language classes share similar problems caused by transitional stress, social conditions are quite different. The expectation that the association will terminate at the close of the term discourages any investment in making friends. However, the wives' class does not disband at the end of a semester. Rather, many of the same students and teachers reconvene term after term in the same setting; the continuity necessary to the survival of a community is always present.

Further, for the academic student studying English, the absence of free time to socialize, characteristic of being a university student, and the diverse nature of their several major fields tend to stifle the development of close relationships until the student is in her major field. By then many of the stress adjustments have already been made. In contrast, the women in the wives' class generally have an abundance of time to make friends with each other. Fin-

ally, in addition to having to make similar adjustments as they fill basic needs, establish new nesting patterns, and work through the several stages of culture shock, the wives generally share a need to develop domestic skills and an intensive curiosity about their new environment and the people who live there. These create those conditions which are needed to institute a functioning community.

In addition, the uniqueness of the teachers in the wives' program also contributes to the sense of community which Larsen and Smalley consider so necessary to the amelioration of culture shock. Although they typically do not have professional training, these teachers possess the nurturing skills which the linguistic and cultural child-adult needs. In the absence of semester time limits and the necessity for tests and grade assessments, the adversary relationship which obtains in the usual classroom between teacher and student is replaced with the warmer, more affective knower-teller one. Rivers (1981) addresses herself to how essential this warmer relationship is. The language learner "strips [her]self of the protective devices refined use of a well-known language provides" and she must be willing to return to a much less mature level of expression, causing the adult learner to feel both foolish and vulnerable. Given this vulnerability, it seems most likely that the warm, communicative, nonthreatening environment of the wives' class provides many of the conditions which modern language learning theory considers optimal.

Having established that the students entering the wives' class are likely to be under severe psychological stress and that the affective conditions which exist in the program provide a suitable learning environment, despite the lack of professional teachers, the next criteria in the program design to consider is that of the syllabus

design.

First it is necessary to consider the characteristics of the learner and her motivation for studying English. The students have already been identified as adult women. Their interests in learning English are generally instrumental. That is, they are interested in learning the language as a means to achieve a personal and specific goal, as contrasted with the integrative motive where learning the target languge is only part of becoming an accepted member of the target culture. Gardener, et al. (1974) have found that the instrumental motivation can be an asset if the learners' native community highly values the ability to use the target language. Such is the case with many of the women who participate in the wives' class and is a major motivation behind their participation. But beyond the prestige it may afford them, their interests in learning English are very intrumental in another sense: to be able to shop, to arrange for a baby sitter, to tell a landlord about a leaking faucet, to get a shoe repaired, to read and follow a recipe or a pattern.

In an effective language learning program, the language content must be focussed on the immediate concerns of the students, the strategies by which he can learn to communicate her needs. That standard classroom procedures of teaching a given number of forms and assessing how well they have been memorized can negatively affect language learning is discussed by Widdowson (1981). He argues that goal orientation, focusing on the ends of learning, has as its terminus the end of the course. But the purpose of learning a language is to communicate. The process orientation focuses on the means by which language can be learned, so that the student is taught strategies for

on-going language learning. Although the focus in the wives' program is on language learning skills, the fact that there are no deadlines to meet, no grades to post, no proficiency scales to account for, the teaching enphasis can be on the strategies needed to learn a language for communicative purposes, not on achieving an abstract goal.

Following Krashen's (1978) "monitor hypothesis," to be optimally effective, the learner must be exposed to language input at or slightly above her current level of fluency. From this input the learner will attend most intently to those parts which have "here and now" concrete referents, with which she can excercise her language learning strategies to infer the message being communicated, and where the focus is on communication. When the learner is so intently interested that concerns for communicating override the desire to be correct, or not to look foolish, this data becomes intake, the material from which language fluency is acquired. Stress, lack of motivation, and attention paid to grammatical features rather than to communicative needs inhibit the acquisition process. Thus the most effective language learning environment is the natural one where the learner becomes so immersed in the message being communicated that she forgets to attend to rules and regulations.

The design of the course content in the wives' program is such that natural language at the students' interest level dominates. As will be discussed in the section on curriculum, texts are selected for the classes, but they are intended and function merely as a stepping stone to the communicative needs of the women. The fact that the texts are graded according to competency level permits a rough approximation to the condition of input at or near the learner's level of fluency. Although grammar is taught, the focus of the lesson

presentation is on communication. The teachers are instructed immediately to relate forms being taught to the "here and now" by means of pictures, actions or realia.

The objective of these instructions is, of course, to exploit the advantages of natural language input and to get the students involved, communicatively, in the topic under discussion. Stevick (1976) discusses the importance of engaging the mental processes which link the data already stored in the mind with the new information. McKay (1981) states that in effective course design, concepts must not be taught in isolation but in relationship to real needs of the students.

Another strategy implemented to get the students to focus on natural language is the practise of inviting special speakers--a pediatrician, a policeman, the campus health officer--to address the students in matters about which the wives themselves have expressed concern. Aside from the information presented, the pedagogical soundness behind invited guests is that instrumentally motivated students, interested in survival in a new country, are likely to attend carefully to the language being used because it meets their needs. The followup discussions with the teachers maximize those opportunities to develop communicative skills.

Even the unusual classroom setting typical of wives' programs facilities can prove to be an asset. Often classes for the wives are held in home-like settings such as a house or apartment, locations which could be a liability for the engineering student, or the business major, but according to research, such facilities are ideal for the housewife. Shiffren's (1970) studies demonstrate that units of information are stored together in associated images which include

time, place, surroundings, as well as emotional tone. And Anisfeld (1966) shows that when students learn language in the setting in which it is likely to be used, they are more likely to be able to use it. The content of the lessons in the wives' class focusses on the home and the family. For such content the home-like setting is an optimally affective place to learn this language.

The role of the teacher in the curriculum planning is not to be ignored. In this program the teachers have the time and the freedom from academic restrictions, such as testing and time limits, to work with the students as friends. Kohn (1981), after surveying current sociolinguistic research, lists four "idealistic, impractical" techniques which the teacher should use to facilitate language learning: developing the students positive attitude towards herself and the target culture, working to reduce social and psychological distance between the student and the target language community, engaging the students' entire personality in those things they learn in class, and counseling the student to accept the new personality she develops as a result of learning a new language. Impractical and idealistic as Kohn finds them, they are quite possible in the wives' class setting.

And last is the effect that the teacher as role model has on the language learning situation. Fillmore (1982) noted the importance of having a native speaker role model with which the learner could identify. Menshi-Touse, et al. (1980), in a longitudinal study of 50 Iranian university students, found that the single most important factor in achieving English proficiency was the extended opportunity to associate with native speakers. The wives' program provides many such opportunities. The fact that several teachers are used each week for each level and that there are additional opportunities to social-

ize with native speakers in extra-curricular activities provides opportunities beyond those which many students have, even in expensive language schools.

The absence of prescriptive goal objectives, in addition to permitting a process learning environment (Widdowson 1981), also provides the opportunity for the learner to progress at her individual pace. Fillmore (1982) in her longitudinal study of child second language learners found that over a period of two years students showed considerable variety, both between individuals and over time for each student, in the pace with which they could process new material. The fact that the wives' class is not bound by semester boundaries or performance grades permits each student to progress at her own pace.

Of course, the way the wives' program is conducted has several weaknesses. Many times there are simply not enough teachers to meet the classes needs. And the teachers are novices. As noted in the curriculum section they often go through too much material too quickly, they do not understand many of the linguistic and cultural problems with which a trained linguist would have strategies to cope, and particularly at the lower language fluency levels student often get discouraged and quit attending.

Several conditions make the classes difficult to teach. Homelike settings are comfortable for the students and affectively conducive to learning, but in terms of classroom management facilities are generally quite primitive; often one feels fortunate to have a blackboard and chalk. The open enrollment/open attendance rule also causes problems; the language learning patterns are quite erratic for

some of the women, and the teachers never know if they will have one or twenty in a class.

But in spite of the shortcomings, the theoretical base underlying the program design is sound. Several favorable conditions which have been discussed here match some of those which researchers have suggested would be ideal. It would seem that this type of class would be a useful laboratory to test the soundness of some of these suggestions.

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFFING

The administration and staffing of the wives' program is somewhat different from that of the usual academic English program because the structure which holds most university programs together is absent here. There is no university approved, degree-oriented curriculum, no records of students kept in the registrar's office, no grades recorded, no student fees collected, and no staff payroll records kept. And yet the program draws upon university resources for classroom space and supplies and uses its custodial, security, and other support services. Therefore, if it is to survive, the program must have a sponsoring agency within the university which recognizes the importance of such a service to the international community, to the university, and to the community at large, and is willing to use its resources and good offices to support and sustain that program.

The actual administrative responsibility for the program probably falls under one of the service divisions of the university, most likely the same one which handles the admission and processing of international students, or the one which is responsible for the regular English language training program. Whatever the agency, it must

be one which unterstands and has compassion for the needs of the women the program will serve,

JOB DESCRIPTIONS Because of the unique nature of the program, the usual job descriptions and recruitment procedures for staffing are not applicable here. The concern is not with degrees earned in the appropriate field, teaching and administrative experience, publications and research. Rather, with one or two exceptions, the emphasis in staff selection is on the individual's ability to empathize with international wives and their student husbands, and on a general attitude of optimism, a curiosity about, and a willingness to try new things. People who are rigid, who think that the only way to do things is the American way, who consistently look at life negatively, or who see their service in the program as an opportunity to take advantage of their friendships with the women in the classes are not acceptable. 2

The staff who work directly with the women in the classroom need to have another special characteristic--an abundance of patience. Babies sometimes fuss; toddlers wander around and may get under foot; sometimes the classroom gets quite noisy. In addition, volunteers and students often have higher priorities, so both student attendance and volunteer service are not always predictable. In spite of the most careful planning, some days there is one teacher for thirty students and other days five teachers arrive to teach five students. Those who like to have orderly, quiet places to work may not enjoy working in such a program.

One final general requirement for those working directly with the wives: they should be women. There are several reasons for this rule. Some cultures forbid women being in the presence of men unless

their husbands are also there. Also, many of the problems that these women encounter are those which require the empathetic ear of another woman. Many men are outstanding teachers but so much of this program is designed to fill social and psychological needs; the students would be most reluctant to ask men for advice regarding morning sickness, labor contractions or fights with their husbands.

PROGRAM STAFFING

DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR Whatever the department or agency sponsoring the program, one of the administrative staff of that agency must have the responsibility for the wives' program. She must know the heirarchal structure of the university and be committed to the survival of the program, because she is the person who functions as the link between the program and its sponsor. Unless she understands the purpose of the program, the uniqueness of its operation, and the value of its contribution to the university, the program cannot survive. It takes dedication and knowledge of the system to sustain a program staffed by volunteers and operated with virtually no funding.

The coordinator keeps in touch with the group's activities, maintaining a dialogue with the program's director, ascertaining that supplies are available, that a capable professional language advisor satisfactory to the needs of the program is appointed and paid, and that the physical plant required is available. It is her responsibility to define just what personnel, equipment, and supplies the university will support and to establish a budget for those items. Typically the supplies might include a set of textbooks for classroom use, chalk, erasers, the use of the duplicating equipment for classroom supplemental supplies, and files and cupboards for storing these

items. She must determine which of the campus facilities, such as the library and the language labs are to made available to the students, and extend any available visitor privileges to the volunteer staff.

DIRECTOR The director functions as the facilitator and implementer of all the activities, has final approval on the selection of the professional language advisor, and directs the recruitment of staff to fill the teaching responsibilities. It is imperative that she understand the double-pronged function of the program--both to teach English and to facilitate the adjustment of the students in the program to their lives in the United States--and recognizes that each point of the prong is as important to the success of the program as the other. Since the director's attitude sets the tone for the entire program, if she is oblivious to economic, religious, racial, or national distinctions, and is able to accept each student as a special friend with whom she can share her knowledge of her country, her language, and her experiences of being a woman becomes an example the other members of the staff are quite likely to follow.

In addition to the above responsibilities, the director's duties include teaching classes, attending most of the class activities, and counseling lonesome women. The director, of all the people in the program, offers the greatest sense of continuity for the student; and her equally warm acceptance of all the students, her genuine interest in each woman, and her physical presence are vital to the success of the program. The time commitment is extensive. She must be able to spend most of the class hours in the classroom area, if not teaching, then making herself visible for the counseling that is part of her job.

Other useful skills and attributes might include her personal

involvement with social groups in the community from which volunteer staff members might be drawn, experience in working with other community organizations which are staffed largely by volunteers, a familiarity with the cultural, social, and academic resources in the community which the program can use to supplement its activities, an expertise in conducting fund raising activities for special program needs and, as an extra advantage, a social sophistication which permits her to protect the program at the upper levels of the administration when such actions are needed. Several of these tasks might be relegated to the other staff personnel or to members of a program auxiliary organization created to assist the development of the wives' program.

PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE ADVISOR This position requires a trained ESL instructor who serves as a model teacher and quasi-administrator. She must not only be capable of teaching, as the needs arise, any skill at any level, and often at several levels at once, but she will be expected to select suitable texts, design placement tests, plan a flexible course outline, give in-service training to the volunteer teachers, and encourage them as they work in the program.

The language advisor works closely with the director in planning extra-curricular activities and designing a course calendar which integrates lessons, guest speakers, and activities. She also serves as the direct liason between the program and the sponsoring agency, directly accountable to the department coordinator. Further, she assembles supplemental teaching materials and introduces the students to the other language learning facilities on the campus to which they may have access.

In several ways the language advisor functions as assistant director. But there are several distinctions between this position and that of the director. First, unlike the rest of the staff, the language advisor is an employee of the university. She may be a full-time instructor who has this program as part of her teaching assignment, or she may be drawn from a teaching assistant pool or from among the part-time teaching staff. Because she is drawn from the university's teaching staff, and particularily if she is either a teaching assistant or a part-time teacher, she may not be well-acquainted with the university or the community. Further, although she is a professional ESL instructor, her past experience may not have prepared her for working in the unique circumstances which prevail in the wives' classes. In that event, the director and the more experienced volunteers become her teachers in the area of working with adult language teaching programs and volunteer personnel, and the community resources available to supplement the language program.

And finally, the job description for language advisor is formidible, its implementation demanding. The only way to get adequately qualified people in this position is to recognize that the wives' program can provide entry level experience for someone intent on becoming an ESL administrator. As such a training ground, it is an ideal position, but only as a stepping stone. Capable language advisors can be expected to be temporary.

TEACHING STAFF These women usually are all volunteers. They may be drawn from university support groups such as the faculty wives' association or from an international interest group, or they may be recruited from the community at large through the personal social contacts of staff members. Warm, generous, empathetic women who have

lived overseas or have travelled extensively make excellent candidates (Trifonovitch 1981). Volunteers need no special previous training but in-service training and followup are essential. Newly recruited teachers must be willing to spend some time observing classes, and studying the text books and teachers' manuals. All the teaching staff participates in the in-service training given by the professional language advisor.

The time commitment is flexible, but the work is much more enjoyable if these volunteers can work at least one session a week. This way they get to know the students, the lesson material is easier to teach and, in general, they feel much more a part of the program. Planning teaching schedules is facilitated if they can commit themselves to one particular time assignment on a regular basis.

FRIENDS OF THE INTERNATIONAL WIVES' PROGRAM If potential volunteers cannot give the time needed to function as active teachers, or if they have health or transportation problems, they can still serve the wives' program through an auxiliary, the Friends. Principally, Friends relieve the director of some of her responsibilities and offer a support service for the teaching staff. Among these services might be the task of handling sick calls and substitutions, making phone calls needed to arrange adequate transportation for a field trip, arranging for special speakers and other extracurricular activities, developing supplementary teaching materials such as a mounted picture file and a collection of realia, teaching special classes in typing, sewing, or cooking, planning bake sales and other fund raising activities, and making arrangements to have the students and their families visit American homes.

In the event that such an auxiliary is not feasible, the most critical of these tasks, particularily scheduling teachers to cover sick calls and teaching the special classes, could be assigned to the teaching staff.

CURRICULUM

Because the underlying purpose of the wives' program is not just to teach English to the wives of international students but also to help them adjust to life in a new country and yet meet some of their needs as individuals, the curriculum must be flexible. That is not to say it cannot be structured or organized. Indeed, because of the flexible nature of the program, planning is crucial. Texts must be selected and the time to be spent on each unit outlined. Then into this outline dates for the special programs, field trips, and guest speakers must be found. Further, time must be planned that will accommodate a student who needs to know the special places she can take a family member who is coming for a visit, an impromptu ice cream party on a hot day, a young woman who is trying to determine if those little pains and twinges are really signs that her baby is about to be born.

This paper describes a program which meets four days a week for three hours each day, serving from twenty to fifty students, placed at three levels with the flexibility to accommodate a fourth for those not literate in their native languages or who have had no previous English language training. The curriculum consists of lessons in English for about seventy-five percent of the assigned class time or three of the four class meeting days each week. The remainder of the time is taken up with special programs such as guest lecturers, cook-

ing classes, holiday celebrations, potlucks and other activities. In addition, extra-curricular activities such as sewing and typing classes, as well as field trips and parties at private homes, are held outside the regular class time. As far as possible and practical, these special events serve both purposes of the program, socialization, and providing natural language input.

A calendar of the major activities, and the general time alloted to the lesson units in the assigned texts is coordinated with the general university calendar. This makes it possible to invite guest speakers, and plan holiday celebrations and larger field trips. An important criterion in planning the calendar is to be sensitive to the needs of the students. Special activities are avoided during exam week, and classes are not held when the university is in recess so that the wives are free to spend holiday time with their husbands.

The actual English language classes form the backbone of program; the students need to feel they are learning English. But the language instruction must be structured loosely enough that these other goals can be met. This structure is provided for by selecting textbooks and other language learning materials suitable for the peculiar needs of this program and then organizing lesson plans so that this material is systematically used. The students get an even stronger sense that they are making progress if the staff evaluates the students' English proficiency as they enter the program and again as they complete a term. Random discussions may be more useful than texts and tests in teaching language, (Dulay, et al., 1982), but they are not concrete evidence of that progress.

PLACEMENT When a woman first comes to the class she (or her husband) is asked to fill out a simple application form, which gives the

director,the language advisorm and the teachers some basic information about her (c.f. Appendix I). They then are placed in three levels (beginning, intermediate and advanced) as determined by a placement tests administered when the women first enter the program. These tests should be designed for placement purposes. Usually, this is the task of the professional language advisor. She can devise a relatively simple "tell me about this picture" test, examining listening comprehension, general vocabulary and syntax measures, After a tentative assessment has been made, reading comprehension and writing samples will give fairly accurate placement.

However, this placement may be only temporary. The women are often under great stress when they arrive (Schuman, 1980) and therefore test low; after a few weeks, when they have become adjusted to their new environment, they may show that they are capable of doing work at a much higher level. Teachers should be aware of these possible changes and make adjustments when they are indicated. Certainly no woman is forced to be at a particular level.

SELECTION OF TEXTS The organization of the English lessons is vital to the success of the program. Factors to take into consideration in selecting a text book series are the number of class levels being served by the program and the special exigencies created by a volunteer student body with all levels of fluency being taught by a staff of volunteer teachers. A convenient division for a moderate size program is three levels: beginning--which assumes some elementary knowledge of English, advanced--students with reasonable conversational fluency, and intermediate--those who fall somewhere in between. As noted above, when the need arises the program can expand to provide

a fourth special class to tutor those who are not literate in their own languages or who have had no previous English language instruction.

There are particular circumstances to be considered when selecting texts for the wives' class (McKay, 1981): the women in the program generally tend to be interested in learning everyday conversational English, their ability to concentrate on studying the language is frequently impaired by domestic responsibilities, and their length of time in the program may vary from a few days to as long as three years.

Special needs of the teaching staff also must be assessed. Most of the instructors are volunteers donating a single morning a week to teaching in the program. Typically they have had no previous ESL training and many have never taught in a formal classroom setting. The language advisor provides in-service training but this cannot adequately substitute for the depth that comes with formal training in second language teaching. Therefore the abilities of the volunteers to work as effective teachers will depend to a large measure upon being supplied with carefully designed texts.

With these considerations in mind, the ideal text would be one which is addressed to adult women, recycles new information frequently but progressively to compensate for irregular attendance (O'Neill, 1980). To provide lessons with the maximimum possible intake, the content should address the experiences which the class members are most likely to encounter: the family, the home, the market, emergency services, university life and information about the United States, its traditions, and customs. The organization of the lesson units should follow the same general structure, so that a turn-over in teachers

will not result in a disorganized learning pattern for the students.

Also under consideration are other factors. Most of the classes will be taught by novice teachers so the materials used in each lesson unit must be scrutinized carefully. Each lesson should contain a balance of the four basic learning skills--listening, speaking, reading, and writing--presented in such a way that apprentice teachers can interpret the instructions with ease. The lesson plan presentation also must meet the special needs of such teachers. A clearly written teachers' manual is a valuable asset, as are student work books, if they closely parallel the materials being presented in the text. Other useful features of a text are chapter summaries of skills studied, unit and section quizzes, and tests of the four skill areas. Although there are no tests given for grades in this program, tests at the beginning and end of the books are useful assessment tools for both the student and the teacher. Supplemental materials such as a picture file, dialogues, drills, maps and brochures, used in appropriate places, will compliment the text material and enhance the learning process.

The final consideration in the selection of texts is the organization of the text series. The frequent division of an English language course into six levels works well for the three level curriculum being described here. With this structure, in the fall semester texts at levels one, three, and five are assigned to the beginning, intermediate and advanced classes respectively. In the spring, books for levels two, four, and six are used. Students who stay only a single term have completed a full book, a real sense of having accomplished something during their brief visit to the United States.

Those who stay two years complete two-thirds of the English course, and for those who are in the program for three years, it is possible to complete an entire English language program.

The Laubach method is the suggested approach for those special students who either have had no English language training or who are not literate in their native languages. The Laubach does not require extensive training as do programs such as the Silent Way and Total Physical Response. Women literate in their own languages but with no previous English language experience can often move into the beginning group in eight to ten weeks; those who are not literate take much longer, perhaps up to a year.

It should be noted that where summer programs are conducted it is advisable to use supplemental texts. A different six level text book series could be used to supplement the regular course materials. From this series only levels two, four, and six would be used. These compliment the course material given in the spring, without duplicating what has already been done or what will be done in the fall, and still give the teachers and students tangible organized material with which to work.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS As was mentioned earlier, the lesson plan must be structured loosely but carefully. Most six level text books contain ten to twelve lessons in each level. A skilled professional teacher, using all the tricks of her trade, can extend one of these lessons to cover four or five days. Novice teachers tend to equate effective teaching with the number of pages covered in a class period. Inexpensive supplemental materials, particularily those which compliment the lesson content are useful to help the volunteer teachers

expand the textbook materials. These supplies and some ideas for application might include:

pictures from clothing catalogues:
names of clothing items, names of colors, comparatives and possessives,
maps of the campus and/or the local shopping area:
giving directions and learning prepositions (students can role play, asking for and following each other's directions.
mounted pictures (clipped from magazines, backed by discarded, trimmed file folders)
foods, action verbs, people of various ages
song sheets
frequent song fests greatly assist the students in learning idioms, English pronunciation and intonation patterns.
"touch and feel" supplies
Sewing, knitting, and crocheting equipment
lexical as well as skill development
plastic fruits and vegetables, food packages, emptied, cleaned and resealed
can be "bought" and "sold", used in a "find the ingredients for a recipe" game.
a supply of various fabric swatches in varied colors and shapes
demonstrate textures, contrasts, practise comparatives
a candle and matches
a lit candle helps to teach the aspiration of word initial consonants

Expensive but nice additional supplements
Language Master
a tape recorder and a supply of tapes
for both listening comprenhension and pronunciation
a televison set, or radio
provides natural speech input for developing listening and comprehension skills

If the class has access to an equipped kitchen:
cupboards and drawers
obvious lexicon, lessons in cleaning, lining with shelf paper, cleaning, arranging contents efficiently,
the refrigerator
obvious terms, also such commands as open, shut, place, remove, give

me, put away, etc.

the stove
the names of parts, meaning of cooking terms such as simmer, broil, etc.

It is not uncommon for these women to be unfamiliar with the proper use and care of these appliances. A game, "What's the matter?" can help teach these skills: ("What's the matter?" "My ice cream is not hard." "Maybe the thermostat is set too low." "What's the matter?" "My lettuce is frozen." "Maybe your thermostat is set too high.")

TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS Ideally, teaching assignments should be part of the monthly calendar. Each teacher should know what level and what lesson she is to teach each day she comes, as well as who taught what the day before and who will teach the day after. But given the exigencies of a volunteer teaching staff, a fluctuating student population, and a loosely structured curriculum, this ideal is difficult to realize. However, some communication on what is being taught to whom is vital. A minimal substitute for the ideal is a notebook on which each teacher records her name, the date, the level taught, the names of students in attendance, the text pages, and other activities covered.

Sometimes a sensitive problem arises regarding teachers' preferences for particular levels. Volunteers are often nervous when they begin working in the program. They find they can relate to the students at the first level they teach and subsequently are reluctant to try another group. Also, students are sensitive to differences in teaching skills and personalities. If the same teacher teaches the same groups consistently, the students often decide to come on the basis of who is teaching that day. Therefore it is important to the success of the program that all teachers are rotated regularily, so

that they can learn to work at all levels. Most of the volunteers, once they recognize the importance of being flexible, are willing to cooperate. Some gentle prodding and a lot of patience on the parts of the director and the language advisor eventually result in the teachers accepting the changes.

It should be noted here that when there is a temporary teacher shortage, the more fluent advanced level women may be used as substitute teachers for the beginning levels. However, the advanced level students attend class to improve their own English so this option should be exercised only rarely.

COOKING CLASSES Most of the students in the wives' classes are young women who are still developing their domestic skills. Further, they tend to be curious about relevant domestic processes in the new culture and are anxious to learn about them. Cooking classes are among the most frequently requested activities. For this reason they are usually held during class time. They serve as excellent language learning opportunities, provide powerful social contact, and also draw new students into the classroom. Perhaps someone will eat something special at a restaurant or a class potluck, see a recipe in a magazine, or want to know more about a food product which has come up as a lexical item in class. One of the teachers or students who knows how to prepare that food will demonstrate in class, with enough for everyone to get a taste, of course. Recipes are written on the blackboard or given in handouts. Special effort must be made to see that, as far as possible, the dietary laws of particular religious groups are not violated.

Sometimes, if there have been no special activities for a few

weeks, the group might decide on a potluck day. Then everyone, students and teachers, is asked to bring a special dish representative of the cuisine of her country. These potlucks are spectacular successes. The food is delicious and beautiful; and when a student from Nigeria is anxious to learn how to make sushi, both the Japanese and the Nigerian women use a lot of English they never knew they had--because they really want to be understood.

GUEST SPEAKERS One of the purposes of this program is to help the women adjust to living in the United States, and in particular to their new community. Inviting guest speakers to come and explain various services and activities on the campus and in the community is one way to accomplish this. A discussion of the student health services, a demonstration on proper dental care, a talk about the birth of a baby, an explanation on how to get help for a medical emergency, or how to prevent fires is presented by professionals in the particular field.

Special preparations must be made when guest speakers come. The guests often will be concerned about being understood and need to be given particular advice on how to be most effective with these women. They are urged to limit their presentation to about thirty minutes, to talk slowly and to use non-technical vocabulary to be most effective. The use of demonstrations, pictures, models or other visual aids is also encouraged. They are also asked in advance if they will permit interruptions if it appears that the students are not understanding. This intrusion sounds impolite, but guest speakers generally welcome it.

Whenever possible, the students should be alerted a week ahead that there will be a special guest. If the speakers are not women,

this is a special courtesy to the Moslem students. Although some will be unconcerned, others will veil themselves or sit in another room where they can listen without being seen; one or two just may not attend that day.

The teachers can be a particularily important part of the preparation for guest speakers if they understand how to implement the traditional pedagogical principal of "anticipate, participate, reinforce" commonly used in elementary schools for intensifying the learning experience of such events. A day or so before the guest comes they can anticipate the talk by introducing the students to the general lexis of the subject and discussing the general area of the guest's topic. Speakers are usually scheduled to arrive about a half hour after class begins the teachers will have time to review vocabulary and elicit any questions the women may want to ask of the speaker.

As the speaker gives her presentation, one of the teachers writes the special terminology on the board. Sometimes the director might interrupt the speaker, and explain something that needs clarification. The students are encouraged to participate fully by helping with demonstrations and asking questions. The previously planned questions are discussed. If the speaker has already covered them, they are used as review of what has been said. The teachers are also taking notes of the talk.

The reinforcement starts after the speaker leaves. The women divide again into their regular class levels where the real learning can begin. Now the women are with their familiar friends and teachers. They feel free to ask questions, and the teachers have an opportunity to share with them some of their own notes. Of course, the

reinforcement period extends over the coming days and months.

HOLIDAYS The introduction mentions that this program is designed to help these young women to learn about each other as well as to learn about English and living in the United States. Such cultural sharing helps the women adjust to a new culture (Trifonovitch 1981). Holiday celebrations are one of the most effective ways to share cultures. Therefore, the calendar not only has space for Halloween and Valentine's Day, but also for Holi from India, Japan's Doll Day, and Chinese New Year. The women from the country which celebrates the holiday prepare the activity entirely. They explain the customs, demonstrate some traditions, and often serve a typical food used for that festivity. Plans should be made several weeks ahead for such celebrations, because the students will often want to send for special decorations or native dresses so the presentation can be as authentic as possible.

These are rich learning experiences for teachers and students alike. However, there is a note of caution: the students should be reimbursed for any expenses incurred for serving food if there are any funds. If there is no money for such expenses, discourage the serving of food. It is often the case that these young women are on very strict budgets and yet come from traditions which expect greater generosity than they can afford.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

OTHER SPECIAL ACTIVITIES The most desirable skill next to learning to cook is to acquire the ability to sew. These classes are generally held independently of the English classes, but one of the regular teachers, a member of the auxiliary, or even one of the students may teach it. The biggest problems with sewing classes is obtaining the

equipment. Some women have their own sewing machines but they are often unwilling to lend them. The teacher may bring hers and borrow a friend's. However, the best solution is either to get access to the sewing room in the home economics department, or to obtain machines through donations.

Typing is another favorite class. The campus often has typing rooms which the students may be permitted to use, provided there is a "responsible" instructor there at all times. If this is not possible, a careful survey of the staff and the members of the auxiliary will often turn up several manual typewriters which are no longer in use. Purchase and maintenence of this equipment must come from donations in most cases.

In addition to the three favorites, the students often want to learn to play guitars, to dance, to play tennis, to swim, etc. In each case, a skilled instructor must be found, the necessary facilities arranged, and meeting times and course length established. Since these activities are all outside of the formal class time, the only limits are determined by what the women want and can afford, what the community has to offer, and whether or not the required "responsible person" is available. All of these activities get the students out of the classroom and into the community, where they can use language to communicate, not just to complete drills (Johnson, 1982).

FIELD TRIPS Special trips can be arranged to popular points of interest, but as one student pointed out: "We can go there with our husbands. What we want to see are American homes, American schools and other places that we cannot get into or know about." Among the requests are to take a hike, go to a concert rehearsal, visit an

elementary or high school classroom, attend an American church, and visit ordinary American homes. Other activities might include street parties, club bazaars, crafts demonstrations and visits to museums, or historical monuments which are not part of the usual tourist tour. As with the other activities, maximum opportunity must be provided to help the students learn English while they are enjoying themselves. The usual anticipation of what will be seen or done, with the appropriate vocabulary, the illustration (participation) of what they have been prepared for during the trip and the classroom reinforcement after the trip can be used here in a manner similar to that used with special speakers or cooking demonstrations. However, the teaching should never be permitted to impinge upon the enjoyment.

Among the special kinds of outings are: a Christmas luncheon at one of the teacher's homes, a summer swim party at another's, and as a closing activity a family picnic to which the women and their husbands and children are invited. Once again these activities are part of the program design, planned to give the women communicative opportunities, and to help them participate in community activities (Monshi-Touse, et al. 1980.).

FACILITIES

In order to operate effectively, the wives' program must have a place to meet and a minimum of equipment and supplies. The first consideration is a regular meeting place which can be used consistently, from term to term and from year to year. This place may be a small house near campus, an apartment in the married students' housing, or traditional classrooms. Some campuses have a community services building or a church whose director would be willing to share facilities. The location should be convenient to a nursery school and

public transportation. Husbands will be concerned that the area is relatively crime free; and staff recruitment is also easier in secure areas. The location should be stable. If the site is off campus, provision must be made for parking, custodial services, and possibly security protection. Facilities on campus usually have these services as part of normal campus maintenance.

The actual space required depends upon the size of the student body. In the three level program being described here, three rooms close together and large enough to seat about fifteen students each, plus a service room nearby are adequate. Even better would be to have one of these rooms large enough for the entire group to meet together on special occasions. Each classroom needs to have chairs, a table large enough for several students to write at, and a blackboard. It is assumed that these rooms will be properly lit, heated, and ventilated.

There should be some locked storage areas for files and teaching supplies, and access to a telephone. Toilet facilities need to be conveniently located; toddlers being toilet trained cannot wait too long.

In addition to the basic space requirements, there are several desireable conveniences. Primary among these are kitchen facilities. The most frequent extra-curricular activity is cooking. Further, cooking equipment and household cleaning are part of many lessons; implementing such lessons is much easier when the kitchen is nearby. Other conveniences include access to a typing room and sewing room. However, these can be arranged for in several ways.

The service room may be no more than a large closet. Because all

of the texts, the filing cabinet for cataloging supplemental materials, visual aids, and other tangible equipment belonging to the program are valuable, the service area must either have a sturdy door which can be locked or have several well secured cupboards behind which all the equipment can be protected. If such a room is available, it may also serve as a workroom for duplicating materials. Some service areas have a wash sink which, if no kitchen is available, can be pressed into service as the nucleus for an impromptu kitchen.

Couches and cushioned chairs, carpets and drapes, toys for the children, and fresh coffee at break time are luxurious amenities which are possible, but they can not usually be obtained with money from the university.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Before a university can commit its resources to such a program as the English classes for the wives of international students, it must be able to assess the costs and benefits accrued. On-going expenses may be summarized as follows:

Classroom space and its maintenance.

The cost of paying a department executive for the share of her time spent in facilitating the administrative functions of the program.

The salary of a professional ESL instructor to serve as program coordinator. For the program being described here the position would be counted as half-time.

Necessary textbooks, workbooks, and other consumable supplies.

The cost of secretarial support services, photocopying, and similar materials-preparation expenses.

Other incidental expenses as deemed acceptable by the university and the administrating agency; i.e., use of the language lab, li-

brary, typing, and cooking laboratories,

courtesy parking privileges for the volunteer teachers.

In a program of this nature, the university is not expected to furnish anymore than the barest essentials. All other costs are met through donations. (See Appendix II for the itemized annual costs for a typical program.)

This organizational structure has a special advantage in being staffed almost entirely by volunteer workers. These women generally have a history of being involved in similar services, are experienced in soliciting funds from many sources for their other activities, and may be willing to apply their talents to soliciting money for this program. Campus groups interested in international relationships, faculty support groups, department wives groups, and many service organizations from the community at large are sometimes willing to contribute funds from time to time for field trips involving the hiring of a bus or for the purchase of special equipment. In other

words, if the university will underwrite the ongoing expenses, the funds for extras can come from other sources. Indeed, the wives themselves are often willing to participate in fund-raising activities. However, a note of warning: all fund raising activities, even casual solicitations from relatives, must first be cleared by the director, through the sponsoring agency, lest they conflict with plans the university.

CONCLUSION

The wives' program costs money, energy and resources. However, the benefits for the students and their families, for the university, for the community, and for the ESL profession, justify these expenditures.

It is clear that the students benefit. Often shy, frightened, almost mute when they enter the program, the women soon make friends with other women from all nations, learn to cook with an international flair, sew their own dresses, become confident about shopping in a supermarket, and making doctor's appointments. And they learn communicative English to accomplish these skills. Further evidence comes from husbands who thank the teachers for making their homes happier. As one young man told a language advisor recently: "If you did not have the wives' classes, I could not finish my studies."

Some of the women gain enough confidence in themselves to enter the regular language program in the university and some become fluent enough to become university students with degree objectives.

The university gains. As the wives of students develop the ability to cope with an alien environment and the heirarchy of basic needs are fulfilled, their husbands have more of the support they need

to devote to their studies. And there is the potential of increased revenue from those women who eventually enroll in university courses. There are advantages to the profession of teaching English as a second language. For institutions with teacher training programs, the wives' clases offer a functioning laboratory for learning about many aspects of adult education. And as has been mentioned earlier, the fact that there is an entirely different social climate in these classes indicates that some comparative studies between the wives classes and regular academic classes should produce some fruitful results regarding some very popular theories about the importance of affective factors, the place that grades and tests play in the learning process, and whether semester time blocks are advantageous.

Another advantage, not to be ignored, is the enhanced public relations image of the university. Parents from overseas, looking for a university to which to send their children, are impressed by an institution which cares enough to support this type of program. Educational missions and large corporations looking for institutions to which to send international students consider an active, successful wives' program an important indication that the university has a definite commitment to provide a strong support system for international students (Woodward, 1983).

The recruitment of volunteer teachers from the greater community establishes and strengthens communication between the university and the community. It is common to bring new volunteers into the program who have never been to the campus before. Once they become familiar with this one program they are generally supportive of the university in general.

For the academic institution with a significant number of foreign

students enrolled, particularily those with dependent families in the United States, an investment in English classes for the wives of these students accrues advantages of far greater value than the dollars spent and the time donated.

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APPENDIX II

Annual Expenses

Computed on the basis of a twelve month schedule at an urban university in a program serving an enrollment of between twenty and thirty-five students.

Classroom space and maintenance	$ 4800
Administrative expenses	4200
Salary for program coordinator	12264
*Textbooks, workbooks, and other consumable supplies	425
Materials preparation	120
Courtesy parking for volunteers	1200
Total	$ 23009

*The textbook figure assumes that the program will support only a minimum number of texts and workbooks to supply newcomers. The regular students are generally expected to purchase their own.

Expenses for extracurricular activities

Field trips - includes hiring buses for two outings	$ 700
Cooking classes and holiday expenses	240
Sewing classes - includes repair of two machines and purchase of a second-hand one.	250
Total	$ 1190